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veil of neutrality, trade is carried on, supported by fraud and perjury: for these pretended neutrals have false colours, and false custom-house papers, which latter are procured by false affidavits. The entire system is debasing in the extreme, alike injurious to private morals, and a sense of national honour.

Distillation from grain is now prohibited, both in Great Britain and Ireland. The Irish distillers are justly disappointed in their shameful attempt to induce, by large offers, government to permit them to go on for three months. To their infinite disgrace, the distillers manifested, that all feelings of humanity, in a total disregard to the sufferings of the poor, from the high prices of provisions, were absorbed in a sordid attention to their own interests.

The poor are already greatly distreseed by the high prices of all the necessaries of life. Accounts from Scotland represent the harvest in the Northern parts as in a most deplorable state. Among the Occurrences is placed an account of the distress, and some consequent riots at Aberdeen, extracted from the Morning Chronicle, which has not yet found its way into our Irish papers. Distress also is very great in Dublin, from the failure of an eminent house in the military clothing line, and other failures in consequence among the clothiers, by which many looms in that part of the city called the Liberty, are thrown idle, and the distresses of that all always wretched portion of the population of Dublin is greatly increased.

The state of our depreciated paper-currency does not improve. Its relative value to bullion remains with little variation from the prices stated in last month's report. The exchange with foreign countries is another test of its depreciation. Bills drawn in the Peninsula are at a discount of 30 per cent., making a loss of so much to government for all the bills drawn by their commissaries, thus enhancing the prodigious expenditure of the campaign.

The hardihood of ministers, and the obsequiousness of Parliamentary majorities, have been lately glaringly exhibited on the question of the depreciation of our circulating medium. The bill passed last session to prevent the sale of guineas, and now just re-enacted, is in direct opposition to one of the resolutions moved by the present Chancellor of the Exchequer, Vansittart, prior to his being in that station, in opposition to the report of the Bullion Committee, "that a one pound Bank of England note and one shilling, are in public estimation equal to a guinea." While the bill was in progress this session, which so completely contradicts this assertion, by rendering the acquiescence, declared by the resolution voluntary to be compulsive, Samuel Whitbread, to prove how far effrontery would carry the minister and his adherents, moved to expunge the resolution. Without any debate, or assigning any proof, the house immediately proceeded to re-resolve their former resolution, and thus the vote of the house, and their own bill, stand completely at variance. If the one-pound note and the shilling represented a guinea in public estimation, there would be no need for an Act of Parliament to render the acceptance compulsory.

Exchange on London has generally, through this month, been in Belfast at 6¾ per cent.

CELESTIAL PHENOMENA.

FOR JANUARY, 1813.

On the 2d, is new moon, at 57 minutes past 4 in the afternoon.

On the 16th, is full Moon, at 40 minutes past 5 in the afternoon.

On the 1st of February the sun will be eclipsed, partly visible in Belfast; the sun rises eclipsed about the time of the greatest obscuration; the eclipse ends at 49 minutes past 8 in the morning.

Mercury rises on the 1st, at 49 minutes past 7, A.M.

Venus rises on the 1st, at 56 minutes past 5, A.M. Mars, at 5 minutes past 3, A.M. Jupiter, at 12 minutes past 6, P.M. Saturn, at 43 minutes past 8, A.M. Georgian, at 8 minutes past 5, A.M.

On the Comets which appeared in 1811; *by the Chevalier Delambre, perpetual Secretary to the Imperial Institute.*

In the year 1811, two comets were discovered in the south of France. The first was discovered at Viviers, on the 26th of March, 1811, by M. Flaugergues, correspondent of the Imperial Institute. It then gave only a very feeble light, and was without any apparent tail or nucleus. On the 19th of April, M. Burckhardt could see it with the finder of his telescope; but the telescope itself made it indistinct, because it magnified it too greatly. Curious people ran in crouds to the Imperial Observatory, to see, through the largest telescopes, a comet which they could have seen more distinctly with the smallest opera-glass. M. Burckhardt calculated its orbit; a labour which was very difficult, from the smallness of the arc, and the inaccuracy of the observations. Nevertheless, his attempt was sufficient to prove, that the comet would soon disappear, because it would be lost in the rays of the sun; that is to say, it was about to rise and set nearly at the same time as the great luminary. M. Burckhardt also announced, that this comet would re-appear towards the middle of August; that it would then be at nearly the same distance from the earth, but twice as near to the sun; and that thus its light would be quadrupled: that on the 13th of August, it would rise an hour and a half before the sun; that on the 15th of September, the time of its perihelion, it would be so near the pole as not to set; that from this time it would increase in size and brilliancy for a month, because it would be approaching towards the earth; that it would then be on the wane, but might be seen with small glasses, till January, or perhaps later; and lastly, that the distance from the comet to the earth would be always considerably greater than that from the earth to the sun. These predictions, which have been confirmed by the event, created no sensation at the time, because they came too soon. Astronomers, however, after having specified so long beforehand whatever they thought would interest the public, continued to observe the comet in silence, and to compare their observations, in order to rectify the trivial, though inevitable, errors which always appear in the first sketch of an orbit. M. de Flaugergues, who first saw the comet, noted down all his observations: after having determined the elements of the orbit, he thought he saw some resemblance between them and those of a comet which was seen in China, about 510 years ago. M. de Flaugergues, however, by searching into the records of antiquity, found that there had been several comets, all of whose appearances were different, in the course of 510 years. Messrs. Bouvard, Gauss, and Lindenau, who also determined the orbit of the grand comet of 1811, thought, on the contrary, that its period could not be less than from 1000 to 1500 years, and that it might even be much longer. This comet, however, which has made so much noise, had nothing to render it more interesting than any other. After having ascertained the course which it would take, the astronomers could do no more than repeat the proceedings which are printed in every treatise on astronomy. But this was not what interested the great mass of the public. They seemed to want dissertations on the physical constitution of the comet; on the nature and cause of the long tail, that appeared like a veil over a lady's face, symmetrically disposed on each side, in two opposite curves, at first at a tolerable distance, but which afterwards came together, and finally incorporated. On this subject astronomers are certainly no better informed at present than they were in the last century. Some writers have told us how many miles the comet travelled in a certain time. Vain inquiry, which an astronomer may sometimes make, out of complaisance, but to which he does not attach the smallest importance. The comet, at the time of its greatest motion, did not equal that of Venus, still less that of Mercury. We can see Venus almost always: she approaches much nearer to the earth than the comet has ever done; but nobody has thought of asking how many miles Venus travels daily, and nobody has been induced to fear that she would fall to the earth. It must, however, be admitted, to the glory of the present age, that the apprehensions of the mass of the people, respecting comets, are greatly diminished; at which circumstance superstitious minds are not a little displeased! The second comet was discovered at Marseilles, on the 16th of November, by M. Pons, who had already found out seven or eight others. Its right ascension was about ten minutes per day, opposite to the order of the signs, and its declination towards the north pole, thirty-three minutes. It was then very weak, and could scarcely be seen at Paris; while the bad weather obstructed the efforts of the astronomers, and they found much difficulty in making a few doubtful observations. Nevertheless, M. Burckhardt calculated its orbit, though he only considered it as a shapeless outline; but it was found to be nearly the same as that which M. Gauss had ascertained by other observations, made, perhaps, under rather more favourable circumstances, on account of the more southern latitude of his residence. The comet, however, passed its perihelion soon afterwards, and shortly disappeared. Its least distance from the sun was 8′ of the distance of the earth from the sun. Notwithstanding this distance, which accounts for its feeble light, and the slowness of its motion, if the weather had been finer, it would have been better seen than the beautiful comet which preceded it; because its nucleus was more apparent, and more perfect. We know, on the whole, that it did not resemble any of the numerous comets whose orbits have been defined.